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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DHAKA 003711

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR PERLA R. LUCERO OES/STC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KSCA](#) [TSPL](#) [AMGT](#) [OTRA](#) [APER](#) [SENV](#) [ECON](#) [BG](#)

SUBJECT: DHAKA PROPOSAL FOR EMBASSY SCIENCE FELLOWS PROGRAM - 2005

REF: STATE 123789

1. This cable responds to reftel's invitation to apply for projects funded under the Embassy Science Fellows Program (ESFP). Two proposals follow.

National Tuberculosis (TB) Control Programme of Bangladesh:

2. Tuberculosis is a major public health problem in Bangladesh, which has the fifth highest burden of TB cases in the world. About 300,000 TB cases, including 137,000 smear-positive pulmonary TB cases, and 70,000 deaths, are estimated to occur every year.

3. Bangladesh endorsed the Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (DOTS) therapy in 1991. Since 1993, DOTS has been implemented through the National TB Control Programme of Bangladesh (NTP) and, according to a 2002 World Health Organization (WHO) estimate, DOTS is available in 95 percent of the country. While the case detection rate is 40 percent, the cure rate is 84 percent of the detected cases in the DOTS program areas. Quarterly and annually, NTP has to report its progress in expansion of DOTS to the Bangladesh government's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and its development partners at WHO, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the Global Fund Against AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM). These data concern numbers of patients diagnosed with TB, treatment outcomes, service delivery strengthening, quality of microscopy, training, partnerships, advocacy, communication activities, social mobilization activities, performance, operational research, and finances.

4. NTP and its partners have identified an urgent need for an overall monitoring and evaluation plan with computerized entry of all data. Technical assistance, including development of a computerized recording and analysis mechanism, is needed for two months. In addition, backstopping during the initial phases of implementation of the system would be needed for, on average, one day every two weeks, ideally for the first six months, if this is possible under the terms of the fellowship.

5. NIH is the most likely candidate agency for a Fellow who could perform this project. A background in TB data collection and the development of data collection systems will be necessary. Experience working at the state, county or local health department level would be helpful as well. Also required is skill with numbers and detail work, computer programming for data collection, and information systems in general. Workspace could be provided either in USAID's Population, Health, and Nutrition section or at NTP itself.

Studying the Effects of Global Warming

6. Global warming is a sensitive political issue at this time, worldwide. Bangladesh has experienced seasonal floods for millennia, which it is currently tackling with some success. During a normal monsoon, anywhere from one to two thirds of Bangladesh is under water. However, it remains at very high risk for water levels elevated even beyond this point due to its topography and location at the mouth of several of South Asia's largest rivers should global warming lead to melting ice caps and rising oceans. According to an informal US Geological Survey (USGS) estimate, Bangladesh should expect to see major changes in its weather and inundation patterns in the next 10 years.

7. We are unaware of any study, in any discipline, that addresses this potentially catastrophic problem. The government of Bangladesh (BDG) has neither the resources nor the vision to deal with this challenge. A country faced with Bangladesh's extreme population and land-use stresses would experience major socio-economic dislocations with even a modest rise in ocean and river levels.

8. An ESFP Fellow could begin the process of educating the BDG and the USG on what to expect in Bangladesh as a result of global warming. A scientist with background in global warming issues could perform a small-scale assessment according to his/her discipline; to include topics such as: meteorology, mapping, ecology, geology, hydrology, environmental science, and biology. NOAA, USGS, NASA, or NSF

are all possible source agencies.

General Requirements/Post Amenities for ESFP Fellow:

9. For any Fellow, Bangla language skills would be ideal. However, many USG scientists come to Bangladesh and accomplish all their research with no specialized language skills. Post's ESTH Officer has yet to encounter a BDG scientist who does not have at least fair English ability.

10. Space in the Embassy is at a premium, but we are confident that appropriate arrangements can be made that would not require a security clearance. However, a Fellow with a clearance at least equivalent to Temporary Top Secret would enhance our flexibility to provide support.

11. Regarding housing, our intention would be to offer any vacant housing or to find a Foreign Service host family. Once we have specific information on a Fellow's timing and personal particulars, we will approach Embassy community members if and as needed. A visa must be obtained from the Embassy of Bangladesh in order for an ESFP fellow to enter the country.

12. It is imperative that the Fellow's parent agency work with M/MED at the State Department to determine how healthcare expenses will be paid. Post's Health Unit is one of the only reliable healthcare facilities in Bangladesh. Gastrointestinal and other illnesses are common and may require short-term treatment. If the Fellow needs to make use of the Health Unit, or if a medevac is required, there must be an arrangement with their parent agency already in place.

CHAMMAS